

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently amended) A wheeled carriage for supporting a patient in a substantially horizontal position, comprising:

a patient support having a length, opposing ends of the length comprising a head end and a foot end of said patient support, said patient support having a pair of lateral sides intermediate the head and foot ends;

a wheeled base having a length and supporting said patient support and enabling movement of said patient support, said wheeled base including at least four floor surface engaging and castered wheels spaced from one another;

an auxiliary wheel support structure secured to said wheeled base and ~~suspendedly~~ supporting at least one auxiliary wheel about an axis transverse to the length of said wheeled base, wherein said auxiliary wheel support structure is configured to enable movement of said at least one auxiliary wheel and to support said at least one auxiliary wheel in a first deployed position and in a second stowed position; and

a control apparatus for controlling said auxiliary wheel support structure to move said at least one auxiliary wheel between at least thea first deployed position whereat said at least one auxiliary wheel is in contact with a floor surface, and thea second stowed position whereat said at least one auxiliary wheel is out of engagement with the floor surface, said control apparatus including at least one manipulative member connected to a transverse control shaft, the transverse control shaft being mounted to said auxiliary wheel support structure, said manipulative membertransverse control shaft

being lowered relative to the wheeled base during lowering movement of said at least one auxiliary wheel to the deployed position and moveraised relative to the wheeled base during upward movement of said at least one auxiliary wheel to the stowed position.

2. (Currently amended) The wheeled carriage of Claim 1, wherein said ~~control apparatus~~ comprises a transverse auxiliary wheel position control shaft is rotatably secured to said auxiliary wheel support structure and said at least one manipulative member connected to said control shaft comprises a laterally oriented manipulative member fixedly secured to an end of and rotatable with said transverse control shaft, said laterally oriented manipulative member being located at one of the pair of lateral sides intermediate the head and foot ends of the wheeled carriage.

3. (Currently amended) ~~The~~A wheeled carriage of Claim 2, ~~said control apparatus comprising a longitudinal control shaft extending along the length of said wheeled base and an end oriented manipulative member fixedly secured to one end of said longitudinal control shaft,~~

wherein for supporting a patient in a substantially horizontal position, comprising:

a patient support having a length, opposing ends of the length comprising a head end and a foot end of said patient support, said patient support having a pair of lateral sides intermediate the head and foot ends;

a wheeled base having a length and supporting said patient support and enabling movement of said patient support, said wheeled base including at least four floor surface engaging and castered wheels spaced from one another;

an auxiliary wheel support structure secured to said wheeled base and supporting at least one auxiliary wheel about

an axis transverse to the length of said wheeled base, wherein  
said auxiliary wheel support structure is configured to enable  
movement of said at least one auxiliary wheel and to support  
said at least one auxiliary wheel in a first deployed position  
and in a second stowed position, said auxiliary wheel support  
structure comprisescomprising a pair of spaced parallel  
support arms each supporting said at least one auxiliary wheel  
at one end and each pivotably mounted to said wheeled base at  
the opposing end; and

a control apparatus for controlling said auxiliary wheel  
support structure to move said at least one auxiliary wheel  
between at least the first deployed position whereat said  
auxiliary wheel is in contact with a floor surface, and the  
second stowed position whereat said at least one auxiliary  
wheel is out of engagement with the floor surface, said  
control apparatus comprising:

a longitudinal control shaft extending along the  
length of said wheeled base;

an end oriented manipulative member fixedly secured  
to one end of said longitudinal control shaft;

a transverse control shaft;

at least one laterally oriented manipulative member  
mounted to said transverse control shaft; and

said control apparatus includes

a transverse control shaft linkagecomprising:

a link bar having one end joined pivotably to  
said transverse control shaft;

a rotatable transfer member rotatably mounted  
to one of said support arms, said transfer member  
having a first projecting section pivotably  
connected to the other end of said link bar and a  
second projecting section;

a swivel member pivotably secured at one end to said second projecting section of said transfer member; and

a swivel joint secured to said longitudinal control shaft for receiving said swivel member, wherein rotational movement of said transverse control shaft acts upon said link bar and said transfer member to generally linearly move said swivel member in a first direction, and wherein the linear movement of said swivel member is translated by said swivel joint into rotational movement of said longitudinal control shaft.

4. (Original) The wheeled carriage of Claim 3, wherein said control apparatus comprises a cam apparatus mounted to said wheeled base and linking said longitudinal control shaft to a cam follower fixed to said auxiliary wheel support structure.

5. (Original) The wheeled carriage of Claim 4, wherein said cam apparatus comprises a rotatable cam member and a cam control linkage so that rotation of said longitudinal control shaft rotates said cam member.

6. (Currently amended) The wheeled carriage of Claim 5, wherein said cam member includes a cam surface having a cam brake/neutral depression and a cam deployment depression, wherein each of said manipulative members is capable of operating said cam control linkage to move said cam follower into contact with said cam brake/neutral depression to provide said at least one auxiliary wheel in the stowed position and is capable of operating said cam control linkage to move said cam follower into contact with said cam deployment depression for lowering said cam follower and moving said at least one auxiliary wheel to the deployed position.

7. (Original) The wheeled carriage of Claim 1, said control apparatus including an auxiliary wheel biasing spring positioned between said wheeled base and said auxiliary wheel support structure for urging said at least one auxiliary wheel into the stowed position.

8. (Currently amended) The wheeled carriage of Claim 1, wherein said control apparatus comprises a transverse control shaft receiving said manipulative member and located along an axis of said at least one auxiliary wheel and movable with moves along the same path as said at least one auxiliary wheel between the stowed position and the deployed position.

9. (Original) The wheeled carriage of Claim 1, wherein said at least one auxiliary wheel comprises a first auxiliary wheel and said auxiliary wheel support structure supports a second auxiliary wheel parallel to said first auxiliary wheel and having the same axis.

10. (Currently amended) The wheeled carriage of Claim 91, wherein in the deployed position on a level floor, at least two of said floor surface engaging wheels adjacent said auxiliary wheel support structure are out of contact with the floor surface.

11. (Currently amended) A wheeled carriage for supporting a patient in a substantially horizontal position, comprising:

a patient support having head and foot ends and a pair of lateral sides intermediate said head and foot ends and a wheeled base supported on at least four floor surface engaging and castered wheels spaced from one another at locations defining corners of a theoretical polygon;

an auxiliary wheel support structure secured to said wheeled base for ~~suspendedly~~ mounting at least one auxiliary wheel oriented inside a boundary of the theoretical polygon, wherein said auxiliary wheel support structure is configured to enable movement of said at least one auxiliary wheel and to support said at least one auxiliary wheel in a first deployed position and in a second stowed position; and

a control apparatus for controlling said auxiliary wheel support structure to pivot said at least one auxiliary wheel between thea first deployed position in contact with a floor surface, and thea second stowed position whereat said at least one auxiliary wheel is out of engagement with the floor surface, said control apparatus comprising:

an elongate longitudinal control shaft having a longitudinal axis parallel to a longitudinal axis of said wheeled base;

at least one end oriented manipulative member connected to an end of said longitudinal control shaft and oriented adjacent one of said head and foot ends;

a transverse control shaft positioned in a central aperture of said at least one auxiliary wheel and oriented along an axis transverse to the longitudinal axis of said wheeled base; and

at least one laterally oriented manually manipulative member connected to said transverse control shaft and oriented adjacent at least one of the pair of lateral sides,

wherein said transverse control shaft rotates moves along with when said at least one auxiliary wheel moves to the deployed position and when said at least one auxiliary wheel moves to the stowed position, and

wherein said longitudinally and laterally oriented manipulative members control deployment of said at least one auxiliary wheel.

12. (Currently amended) The wheeled carriage of Claim 11, said at least one auxiliary wheel comprising first and second spaced auxiliary wheels including auxiliary wheel bearings receiving said transverse control shaft so that said auxiliary wheels rotate independently from rotation of said transverse control shaft, and wherein said transverse control shaft moves along with said at least one auxiliary wheel to the deployed position and to the stowed position.

13. (Currently amended) The wheeled carriage of Claim 11, wherein said transverse control shaft moves along with said at least one auxiliary wheel to the deployed position and to the stowed position, and

wherein said control apparatus includes a transverse control shaft linkage linking said transverse control shaft to said longitudinal control shaft so that rotation of said transverse control shaft rotates said longitudinal control shaft.

14. (Original) The wheeled carriage of Claim 13, said auxiliary wheel support structure including a cam follower, and

wherein said control apparatus comprises a cam control apparatus so that rotation of said longitudinal control shaft rotates a cam member to overcome an auxiliary wheel biasing spring and pivot said cam follower and said auxiliary wheel support structure downwardly so that said at least one auxiliary wheel is in the deployed position.

15. (Currently amended) The wheeled carriage of Claim 11, wherein said at least one auxiliary wheel is in the stowed position when 1) said at least one longitudinally oriented manipulative member rotates said longitudinal control shaft to

a brake position locking said castered wheels or 2) said at least one longitudinally oriented manipulative member rotates said longitudinal control shaft to a neutral position.

16. (Original) The wheeled carriage of Claim 11, wherein said auxiliary wheel support structure comprises a pair of spaced parallel support arms that coact with a cross piece to support said at least one auxiliary wheel.

17. (Original) The wheeled carriage of Claim 16, wherein said control apparatus includes a transverse control shaft linkage comprising:

a link bar having one end joined pivotably to and extending transversely of said transverse control shaft;

a rotatable transfer member rotatably connected relative to one of said support arms, said transfer member having a first projecting section pivotably connected to the other end of said link bar and a second projecting section;

a swivel member rotatably secured to said second projecting section of said transfer member; and

a swivel joint secured to said longitudinal control shaft for receiving said swivel member,

wherein rotational and translational movement of said transverse control shaft acts upon said link bar and said transfer member to move said swivel member in a substantially linear direction, whereby linear movement of said swivel member is translated by said swivel joint into rotational movement of said longitudinal control shaft.

18. (Currently amended) A wheeled carriage for supporting a patient in a substantially horizontal position, comprising:

a rectangular patient support having head and foot ends and a pair of lateral sides intermediate said head and foot ends and a wheeled base supported on at least four floor surface engaging and castered wheels spaced from one another at locations defining corners of a theoretical polygon;

an auxiliary wheel support structure secured to said wheeled base for ~~suspendedly~~ mounting at least one auxiliary wheel oriented inside a boundary of the theoretical polygon, wherein said auxiliary wheel support structure is configured to enable movement of said at least one auxiliary wheel and to support said at least one auxiliary wheel in a first deployed position and in a second stowed position; and

a control apparatus for controlling said auxiliary wheel support structure to move said at least one auxiliary wheel between the first deployed position in contact with a floor surface, and the second stowed position whereat said at least one auxiliary wheel is out of engagement with the floor surface, said control apparatus comprising:

a transverse control shaft extending through a central aperture of said at least one auxiliary wheel and oriented along an axis transverse to the longitudinal axis of said wheeled base; and

at least one laterally oriented manually manipulative member connected to said transverse control shaft and oriented adjacent at least one of said pair of lateral sides,

wherein, when said at least one auxiliary wheel is in the stowed position, application of a force to said at least one manipulative member provides a rotational force component rotating said transverse control shaft and a linear downwardly directed force component assisting in downward movement of said at least one auxiliary wheel to the deployed position.

19. (Original) The wheeled carriage of Claim 18, said control apparatus further comprising:

a longitudinal control shaft having an axis parallel to a longitudinal axis of said wheeled base; and

an end manipulative member secured to an end of said longitudinal control shaft and oriented adjacent one of said head and foot ends; and an auxiliary wheel biasing spring positioned between said wheeled base and said auxiliary wheel support structure for urging said at least one auxiliary wheel into the stowed position,

wherein said at least one auxiliary wheel comprises first and second spaced auxiliary wheels including auxiliary wheel bearings receiving said transverse control shaft so that said auxiliary wheels are rotatable without rotation of said transverse control shaft.

20. (Currently amended) The wheeled carriage of Claim 11, wherein said control apparatus includes a transverse control shaft linkage linking that links said transverse control shaft to said longitudinal control shaft so that rotation of said transverse control shaft rotates said longitudinal control shaft.

21. (New) The wheeled carriage of Claim 18, wherein said transverse control shaft extends through a central aperture of said at least one auxiliary wheel.

22. (New) The wheeled carriage of Claim 3, wherein said manipulative member is lowered relative to the wheeled base during movement of said auxiliary wheel to the deployed position and moves raised relative to the wheeled base during movement of said auxiliary wheel to the stowed position.